



Missouri Department of Conservation Strategic Plan FY19-24

Mission: To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state; to facilitate and provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these resources.

Vision: A future with healthy fish, forests, and wildlife where all people appreciate nature.

Values:

Excellent public service is essential—we work to deliver more than is expected.

All citizens are important—we respect their opinions and value their trust.

Missourians are partners to achieve conservation success—we communicate openly and look for ways to make it easier to partner.

Fairness, objectivity, sound science, integrity, accountability, and transparency guide our actions.

Employees are the Department's most important asset—we all work to advance conservation by being results driven, working as a team, serving as ambassadors for conservation, and living out the conservation ethic through our actions.

21st Century Conservation Model for Success

The Missouri Department of Conservation is proud to be considered one of the finest fish, forest and wildlife agencies in the country. We have built that reputation on a foundation of strong support from Missourians, who continue to show overwhelmingly that our natural resources and the economic vitality they bring to our state are cherished and deserving of protection. For more than 80 years, the Department of Conservation, led by the dedication of the Missouri Conservation Commission and enabled by our talented staff, have ensured Missouri's fish, forests and wildlife provide world class outdoor recreational opportunities for Missourians and visitors alike.

The Missouri Department of Conservation is building on our past successes as we plan for the next 80 years. Our updated strategic plan outlines a **21st Century Conservation Model for Success** to ensure the Department remains a **World-Class Leader in Conservation**.

Today, our challenges are increasingly complex. We are at the start of a century that will see the world's population grow to an unprecedented 9-10 billion inhabitants. The need to feed, shelter and provide water for the world's population will impact every corner of the globe. Humankind's influence on nature will be felt like never before but the Missouri Department of Conservation is optimistic because of the vital role our natural resources will continue to play and the value placed on those resources by Missourians.



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Our challenge is to maintain our high level of citizen participation and conservation successes for fish, forests and wildlife as we overcome competing priorities that may be the result of financial, technological, political or social realities of a changing world. Our answer to those challenges is built on a foundation of **Operational Excellence** in everything we do. It is enabled by our commitment to recruit, develop and support a **World-Class Staff**, ensuring we prioritize the most important work in the most important places through **Strategic Natural Resource Conservation**, and ultimately deliver **Superior Customer Service** to all Missourians.

The focus on Operational Excellence includes improving the **Business of Conservation**:

- Managing to our strategic plan;
- Budgeting our resources for the highest conservation priorities;
- Achieving measurable results through continuous process improvement;
- Ensuring the most efficient and effective organizational structure; and
- Measuring progress towards priority outcomes



Also driving our strategic approach to conservation is the realization that, as challenges evolve, so must our approaches to conservation and our methods for engaging the next generation of Missourians. In the near future, for the first time ever, the majority of the world's population will reside in urban centers. Every aspect of our daily lives can be instantly connected to others anywhere in the world and never has information been so readily accessible. The challenge we embrace is ensuring the importance of our natural resources, our work in conservation, and our mission remain understood, valued and relevant for the next 80 years and beyond.

Our ultimate success will continue to be measured by the health of our fish, forests, and wildlife resources and the opportunities to enjoy nature we provide to the citizens and visitors of Missouri. A hallmark of the Missouri Department of Conservation is taking seriously the need to listen to Missourians' cherished natural resource values, and providing the services they expect. That commitment to customer service is reflected in our values.

Efficiency and effectiveness are more than buzzwords as we work to achieve our mission. Outlined here is an effort to strategically prioritize the most pressing conservation work for the state of Missouri. The Department's strategic framework ensures limited financial resources are invested in the most important conservation opportunities and prioritizes the maintenance of existing infrastructure for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

With your continued support, the Missouri Department of Conservation, with our Conservation Commission and all of our partners, will strive to ensure we realize our vision. That is our commitment to you.

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GOALS

OUTCOMES

1-Sustain and Improve Fish, Forest, and Wildlife Resources

1.1-Missouri has Healthy and Resilient Terrestrial Habitats and Natural Communities

Champion: Lisa Allen
Forestry Division Chief

1.2-Missouri has Water Quality and Quantity that Supports Fish, Forests, Wildlife, and Outdoor Recreation

Champion: Brian Canaday
Fisheries Division Chief

1.3-Missouri has Healthy and Sustainable Populations of Fish and Wildlife

Champion: Jason Sumners
Wildlife Division Chief

1.4-Impacts from Invasive Species and Diseases are Minimized or Prevented

Champion: Mike Hubbard
Resource Science Division Chief

2-Enhance the Relevance of Conservation

2.1-Missourians Value Fish, Forests, and Wildlife

Champion: Jeff Cockerham
Acting Outreach and Education Division Chief

2.2-Missourians Understand and Value the Wildlife Code of Missouri

Champion: Larry Yamnitz
Protection Division Chief

2.3-Missourians Take Action for Conservation

Champion: Bill White
Private Land Services Division Chief

2.4-Missourians Engage in a Range of Conservation-Related Activities, Programs and Recreation

Champion: Shawn Gruber
Outreach and Education Unit Chief

2.5-Strong Partnerships Increase Conservation Involvement

Champion: Jason Jensen
Private Land Services Unit Chief

3-Connect Missourians with Fish, Forest, and Wildlife Resources

3.1-Missourians Have Places to Go to Enjoy Nature

Champion: Jennifer Battson Warren
Deputy Director

3.2-Technology Helps Connect Missourians to Nature

Champion: Doug Fees
Information Technology Chief

4-Strengthen Operational Excellence to Deliver Superior Customer Service

4.1-The Department Provides Superior Customer Service

Champion: David Thorne
Policy Supervisor

4.2-The Department Recruits, Develops, and Retains a World Class Staff

Champion: Tom Neubauer
Human Resources Division Chief

4.3-The Department is a Trustworthy and Accountable Steward of Missourians' Resources

Champion: Cyndi Voss
Administrative Services Division Chief



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GOAL 1: Sustain and Improve Fish, Forest, and Wildlife Resources

OUTCOME 1.1: Missouri has Healthy and Resilient Terrestrial Habitats and Natural Communities

KEY STRATEGIES

1.1.1: Use the Comprehensive Conservation Strategy (CCS) to prioritize landscapes across Missouri to focus conservation effort within priority geographies and Conservation Opportunity Areas (includes urban & rural)

1.1.2: Enhance health and resiliency of terrestrial habitats and natural communities on Department-administered lands, private lands, and partner lands

1.1.3: Research and monitor species and natural communities and their distribution to inform and guide the conservation of Missouri's terrestrial habitats

OUTCOME 1.2: Missouri has Water Quality and Quantity that Supports Fish, Forests, Wildlife, and Outdoor Recreation

KEY STRATEGIES

1.2.1: Conduct comprehensive water planning for fish, forests, wildlife, and outdoor recreation

1.2.2: Increase the resilience of aquatic and wetland ecosystems through water and habitat management

1.2.3: Work with partners to maintain and improve ecological functions of Missouri watershed systems

1.2.4: Educate staff, partners, and stakeholders on the importance and value of healthy lands for healthy waters

OUTCOME 1.3: Missouri has Healthy and Sustainable Populations of Fish and Wildlife

KEY STRATEGIES

1.3.1: Maintain diverse communities of fish and wildlife

1.3.2: Manage harvestable fish and wildlife species at biologically and socially acceptable levels

1.3.3: Recover priority State Listed Species and species of conservation concern (SOCC) to sustainable levels or maintain at present levels as appropriate

OUTCOME 1.4: Impacts from Invasive Species and Diseases are Minimized or Prevented

KEY STRATEGIES

1.4.1: Prevent and manage the impacts from invasive species

1.4.2: Prevent and manage the impacts from fish, plant and wildlife diseases

1.4.3: Create a statewide communication and outreach program for invasive species and diseases



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GOAL 2: Enhance the Relevance of Conservation

OUTCOME 2.1: Missourians Value Fish, Forests, and Wildlife

KEY STRATEGIES

2.1.1: Develop a statewide communication effort to ensure sustained public will for conservation and the Department

2.1.2: Develop information on the value of fish, forests, and wildlife

2.1.3: Identify and communicate messages on the value of fish, forests, and wildlife

OUTCOME 2.2: Missourians Understand and Value the Wildlife Code of Missouri

KEY STRATEGIES

2.2.1: Effectively communicate the Wildlife Code

2.2.2: Ensure stakeholders have the opportunity to be informed of and engaged in the regulatory process

2.2.3: Ensure regulations are based on sound social and biological information, and sustain fish, forests, and wildlife

2.2.4: Enhance the Department's community outreach approach to resource law enforcement

OUTCOME 2.3: Missourians Take Action for Conservation

KEY STRATEGIES

2.3.1: Engage landowners in enhancing the health and resiliency of habitats and natural communities on privately-owned land

2.3.2: Engage local communities to connect Missourians with nature and promote the conservation of fish, forests, and wildlife

2.3.3: Utilize Department volunteers and citizen science opportunities to maximize the delivery of conservation

OUTCOME 2.4: Missourians Engage in a Range of Conservation-Related Activities, Programs, and Recreation

KEY STRATEGIES

2.4.1: Deliver conservation programs and services that are relevant and appeal to a diverse audience

2.4.2: Increase students' awareness of conservation and nature

OUTCOME 2.5: Strong Partnerships Increase Conservation Involvement

KEY STRATEGIES

2.5.1: Establish and strengthen partnerships with organizations that build the Department's capacity to deliver conservation

2.5.2: Expand efforts through partnerships to connect new audiences with nature, particularly urban and traditionally minority audiences

2.5.3: Collaborate with partners to promote citizen involvement in conservation activities



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GOAL 3: Connect Missourians with Fish, Forest, and Wildlife Resources

OUTCOME 3.1: Missourians Have Places to Go to Enjoy Nature

KEY STRATEGIES

3.1.1: Increase access to nature by implementing the Land Conservation Strategy (LCS). Prioritized LCS strategies are:

1. Increase outdoor recreation opportunities in major metropolitan areas and in those counties where the majority of Missourians reside
2. Ensure all Missourians have outdoor recreation opportunities near where they live, including areas of predicted population growth, and assess gaps in outdoor recreation opportunities based on projected population growth and current public access
3. Maintain support for tools and partner projects that advance the Land Conservation Strategy with a renewed focus on partnering in grand and innovative ways that achieve this new strategic vision for land conservation
4. Increase efforts in priority geographies identified during the Comprehensive Conservation Strategy (CCS) planning process
5. Expand efforts for imperiled species and habitats
6. Close inholdings and expand existing conservation areas

3.1.2: Offer a broad range of outdoor experiences through lands, facilities, and programs

3.1.3: Promote the broad range of outdoor opportunities that the Department and partners have to offer Missourians

OUTCOME 3.2: Technology Helps Connect Missourians to Nature

KEY STRATEGIES

3.2.1: Use technology to connect Missourians with conservation information

3.2.2: Use technology to improve conservation program delivery



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GOAL 4: Strengthen Operational Excellence to Deliver Superior Customer Service

OUTCOME 4.1: The Department Provides Superior Customer Service

KEY STRATEGIES

4.1.1: Gain an increased understanding of internal and external customer and partner needs, experiences and expectations

4.1.2: Provide staff (salaried, hourly, volunteers) with education and training needed to deliver superior customer service

OUTCOME 4.2: The Department Recruits, Develops, and Retains a World Class Staff

KEY STRATEGIES

4.2.1: Recruit and develop a diverse workforce that best represents the public we serve

4.2.2: Provide professional development opportunities to promote an increased depth of knowledge, efficiency and career advancement

4.2.3: Invest in a competitive compensation structure

4.2.4: Promote a family-friendly work environment

4.2.5: Create a positive work environment where all staff are valued and respected

OUTCOME 4.3: The Department is a Trustworthy and Accountable Steward of Missourians' Resources

KEY STRATEGIES

4.3.1: Ensure citizen and partner awareness, understanding, and trust through transparent sharing of information

4.3.2: Improve the delivery of conservation programs through the effective and efficient use of staff time and financial resources

4.3.3: Maintain Department integrity through compliance with laws, regulations, and policies